

INTIMATIONS

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FOR 1900

THE THIRTY-FOURTH ANNUAL ISSUE.

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A. S. WATSON & CO., LIMITED.

ESTABLISHED 1841.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Only communications relating to the news columns should be addressed to the Editor. Correspondents must forward their names and addresses for publication, and no correspondence will be published without the name of the contributor.

The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, April 17th, 1900.

"Does that wall be angry, Canada?"

Any one who has followed the course of the recent negotiations with regard to the proposed Pacific Cable cannot but reply in the affirmative; and this he will do all the more decidedly should he chance to be a resident in China. It may be that Lord Salisbury is preparing for us some of those good things which pass man's understanding; but if he be, the methods of the Government are strange and past finding out, and the last exhibition of weakness is by no means reassuring as to what is to come. Now we by no means would be taken to imply that the proposed cable from Africa, by Mauritius, to Western Australia is worthless, but we feel fully justified in the assertion that it is premature, and but a playing with the real needs of the Empire. It is needless to say that, as far as the Colony of Victoria is concerned, a cable across the Indian Ocean is likely to be as effective as one across the Pacific; but more than this cannot be affirmed of it. It certainly, even as far as Western Australia is concerned, possesses no advantage not shared by the other, while for our vast interests in the Pacific, it is immeasurably inferior. The one advantage which it seemed to show over the other, in when we come to examine it, really illusory. The point which apparently made the Government feel that it was taking in hand the construction and maintenance of the Pacific Cable, the Eastern Extension lines were ready in the other case to take the risk themselves. No other parties, it is unnecessary for a Government when it can get a private company to undertake a work requiring a good amount of

pecuniary responsibility, to attempt to interfere, unless, of course, there are other persons which may override the objection. On this we may remark that the pecuniary argument, may fairly be left out of court; the Eastern Extension Companies have had great experience in the Australian traffic, and can gauge to a nicety the amount of traffic passing between Europe and Australia. Knowing this as they do, they have contracted to lay the line without guarranty; and we are justified in the assumption that the Company would not do this unless it felt that it could do so with perfect regard for the interests of the shareholders; to thank otherwise would be to cast discredit on the wisdom, if not on the integrity, of the directors. But if a comparatively barren line, like that which it is proposed to lay across the Indian Ocean, be thus accepted as remunerative, what are we to think of a line with numerous feeders, such as eventually the Pacific Cable route must become? Even more—and here comes in the rub—the Pacific line in time to come must gather to itself the enormous coming traffic of all Eastern Asia. How profitable is that traffic we have only to turn to the published reports of the companies to see.

Engineering gives a summary of the last half-year's working, which is interesting to quote. "The Eastern Telegraph Company," it states, "had an excellent half-year's business, during the six months ending September 30th, 1899. The revenue of the half-year amounted to £474,950; and after deducting working expenses, and the outlay incurred for the repair and renewal of cables, and after providing for depreciation of spare cables, and income tax, £206,890 remained; increased to £310,426 by the balance brought forward from last year." This is good enough, but we learn further that, after paying a dividend at the rate of 20 per cent. per annum, they carried £10,000 to the ship reserve, £5,000 to a removal reserve, £2,000 to an insurance reserve, £100,000 to general reserve, and carried over no less than £33,000 to next year's account. Now we by no means wish to detract in any way from the right of the Company to do what it thinks best with its own, but in those reduplicated "reserves" there is just a suspicion, that the Company wants to throw a little dust in the eyes of the Government, and is doing its best to understate its financial position. One of our greatest and best founded complaints, and in this we are in a like position to Canada, is that owing to the direction in which the lines are laid, we are cut off from any direct communication with America, and that all our messages to the States or Canada had to go first by a circuitous route to Europe, after which they had practically to come back over the fourth diameter of the globe.

In this respect Canada is even in a worse position than ourselves; especially as regards Australia. Now Canada, recognizing this, had offered to bear a very considerable portion of the cost—about one-third—and the British Government, after being asked the usual, had finally engaged to meet Canada by providing a like amount. The Government likewise bound themselves to reduce the rates from the very oppressive rate at which originally, when as yet the lines were on trial, they were fixed. Up to this the Eastern Extension Companies had looked on, but, taking advantage of a suggestion thrown out on other grounds, they proposed to adopt part of the scheme and lay another cable across the Indian Ocean. Unfortunately the scheme thus proposed left the main part of the project—that of providing another line altogether English to India, on one side. The other great desideratum for which the Pacific Cable had been originally planned, namely, that of avoiding in the interests of the northern and southern colonies the necessity of having to traverse three-quarters of the globe, has likewise been dropped in the new scheme, which we learn has met with the approbation of the Home Government. Now Canada naturally complains, and with reason, that the withdrawal of the Government after its promise to Canada is a distinct breach of the faith, and it is difficult, looking at the affair with what knowledge we possess, to come to any other conclusion. Speaking for ourselves, though the pressure is not so direct, we have a clear right to protest against the volte face. Had imperial interests been likely to be in any way advanced, we could have found means to acquiesce in the change, but so far from their being advanced, there is very reason to believe that our imperial interests are being ruthlessly sacrificed to advance those of a private concern; one which, however valuable service it may have done for the State, is yet in such a position financially that it is beyond the need of State aid.

Mr. W. J. Napier succeeds Mr. C. Stringer, who retires on departure to England, as an Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council at Singapore.

Manila papers report that the Filipinos are entering with spirit into the movement of municipal elections. Owing to the turbulence of the voters the authorities seem to have their hands very full.

The insurgent leader, General Pons, whose surrender to the United States authorities he noted the other day, is said to have given himself up to save his life, which was in danger from the insurgents who had plundered and killed, and to be anxious to enjoy a quiet life in Manila with his family.

The North-west correspondent of *L'Echo de Chine* announces that the Liao river was open on the evening of the 23rd ult. and that the first boat, the *Yong Mao*, was sent to Meishan, entered the port about 10 a.m., but was compelled to return on account of the large number of floating logs which were coming down. This fact is also stopping the steamers. The same correspondent announces the departure on the 22nd ult. of Mr. Hsiao to join his husband, General Hsiao, at Wanchow, on his overland journey.

Le Courrier de Haiphong, in the last issue which has reached us, has another of its interesting articles, in which a party of English soldiers is represented as shooting French prisoners tied up to trees. It matters little that the firing party is a totally wrong direction. The remainder of the article is equally untrue. The Boers are dying slowly. If the Boers are dying slowly, they are not dying slowly, they are dying slowly.

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Thames Government of Kowloon, Mr. Taylor is accused of having been in possession of a large quantity of opium, which he is alleged to have sold to the Chinese. Mr. Taylor is alleged to have been in possession of a large quantity of opium, which he is alleged to have sold to the Chinese.

The Hon. Mr. Justice of the Peace, Mr. Taylor is accused of having been in possession of a large quantity of opium, which he is alleged to have sold to the Chinese. Mr. Taylor is alleged to have been in possession of a large quantity of opium, which he is alleged to have sold to the Chinese.

One of the heaviest thunderstorms ever witnessed in Hongkong, took place on the morning of the 16th inst., the whole town being plunged into darkness before the beginning of the rain, which was quite tropical in character.

Some commotion was caused in Kowloon yesterday afternoon by some materials in which the Chinese gun-boats were being built at Hung Hom Docks catching fire. The flames spread with great rapidity, and very soon the materials were completely demolished.

Honolulu appears to be becoming the introduction of the Tongans among the Chinese residents, who gather from the Hawaiian Islands, to the Hawaiian Islands, to the Hawaiian Islands.

The exodus of Chinese coolies engaged by the Hawaiian Government for railway and other works in Lian-tung and Manchuria, says *The Peking and Tientsin Times*, is becoming a serious matter. The Chinese coolies are becoming a serious matter.

It is reported by *The Manila Times*, that the Government of Manila is planning to build a new railway line from Manila to the island of Leyte, and will be fitted up with the latest machinery. The railway line will be fitted up with the latest machinery.

On Saturday and Sunday, the 14th and 15th inst., a dramatic and musical entertainment was given in the hall of the Roman Catholic Orphanage, and on both days a crowd of audience saw a very successful performance. The entertainment was given in the hall of the Roman Catholic Orphanage.

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PRIZE SHOOTING AT KOWLOON.

The annual prize shooting in connection with the Kowloon Rifle Association was brought to a successful close yesterday afternoon at the Kowloon Rifle Range. The following are the results:

WINNERS OF PRIZES.

Mr. J. Marshall, 206
Mr. A. Marshall, 196
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 191

REVENUE COMPETITION.

Mr. J. Marshall, 49
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 45
Mr. A. Marshall, 41

RANGE PRIZES.

Sgt. Maj. Wallace, 52
Mr. J. Marshall, 50
Mr. S. Marshall, 49

Mr. J. Marshall, 50
Mr. S. Marshall, 49
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 48

Sgt. Maj. Wallace, 50
Mr. J. Marshall, 49
Mr. S. Marshall, 48

Mr. J. Marshall, 49
Mr. S. Marshall, 48
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 47

Sgt. Maj. Wallace, 49
Mr. J. Marshall, 48
Mr. S. Marshall, 47

Mr. J. Marshall, 48
Mr. S. Marshall, 47
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 46

Sgt. Maj. Wallace, 48
Mr. J. Marshall, 47
Mr. S. Marshall, 46

Mr. J. Marshall, 47
Mr. S. Marshall, 46
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 45

Sgt. Maj. Wallace, 47
Mr. J. Marshall, 46
Mr. S. Marshall, 45

Mr. J. Marshall, 46
Mr. S. Marshall, 45
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 44

Sgt. Maj. Wallace, 46
Mr. J. Marshall, 45
Mr. S. Marshall, 44

Mr. J. Marshall, 45
Mr. S. Marshall, 44
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 43

Sgt. Maj. Wallace, 45
Mr. J. Marshall, 44
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Mr. J. Marshall, 44
Mr. S. Marshall, 43
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 42

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Mr. S. Marshall, 42
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 41

Sgt. Maj. Wallace, 43
Mr. J. Marshall, 42
Mr. S. Marshall, 41

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Mr. S. Marshall, 41
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 40

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Mr. G. P. Marshall, 39

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Sgt. Maj. Wallace, 40
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Mr. J. Marshall, 39
Mr. S. Marshall, 38
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 37

Sgt. Maj. Wallace, 39
Mr. J. Marshall, 38
Mr. S. Marshall, 37

Mr. J. Marshall, 38
Mr. S. Marshall, 37
Mr. G. P. Marshall, 36

THE TAKING OF THE NEW TERRITORY.

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